177 All those imports from us, living alongside the traditional traits, are no more than curiosities [99:76] in the minds of the Tapirapé, curiosities hardly more important to the functioning of their culture than one of their arrows or legends would be to the average European.

From what I was able to observe, Reverend Kegel usually 177 restricted himself to the teaching of songs and the administration 797 of medicines. Owing to their sporadic quality and short duration, and especially to the difficulty of communicating through words, the encounters with the Dominicans and other visitors have enriched Tapirapé culture even less. Unfruitful, too, were the attempts to wield an influence through individuals who had been taken to the Araguaia by the missionaries and who knew more about the White way of life than those who had never left tribal territory. It is well known how easily many of the Brazilian Indians educated in our civilized centers have re-adjusted to and been re-absorbed by their native environment (cf. Baldus 7, 165, and Araujo Lima 134-135). Actually, I did not see any Tapirapé who had lived with the Whites long enough to experience the conflicts of the "marginal man" of Park, Stonequist, and other American sociologists.

The impoverishment of Tapirapé culture was induced large- 164 ly by the diseases of the Whites, but these were introduced only partly as a result of direct contact. It is probable that the neighboring Karajá, continually exposed to contagion as inhabitants of the Araguaia, frequently acted as transmitters. This at least may be assumed as regards the strange diseases which were introduced prior to direct contact with the Whites. As Wagley (2) masterfully [114] pointed out, the catastrophic depopulation caused by the epidemics 165 that raged around 1895 and 1900, and later ones as well, affected [731] the social organization to such an extent that important traits of [178] Tapirapé culture were modified or lost.

The Tapirapé often told me that in the old days their people 177 knew everything about such celestial phenomena as eclipses and [821] about many other mythological subjects, and now know almost nothing. This may not be solely the result of the mortality caused [731] by epidemics and by the bellicose attacks of neighboring Karajá [726] and Kayapó. Some old people did survive. I can imagine the pressure exercised by the presence of our culture upon the minds

apparently was aggravated by pneumonia. During the rainy season that followed, this epidemic caused great mortality throughout the tribe, also killing Ikaranchó and his wife. Then the separatists returned to Tampiitáua.

The eighteenth century map reproduced in this work points out with three triangles the "Aldeas do Gentio Tapirapé [villages of the Tapirapé people]." In his account of Alfredo Olimpio de Oliveira's 1911 expedition, Angyone Costa (222-223) writes as follows about the Tapirapé of the time: "These Indians occupy three villages, the first one located two days' journey from the riverbank, the second one three days' away. The explorer did not visit the third one."

The following appears in the account of the Dominican expedition of 1914 printed in the Mensageiro do Santo Rosário (317): "The Tapirapé form three groups, or rather three malocas [villages], five days' journey apart. The Indians can walk 50 kilometers a day. This shows how huge is the region inhabited by such a relatively sparse tribe. The village we visited had 16 huts, each one sheltering several families. It is true that when the Fathers drew near, some of the huts were emptied, and families, urged on by a suspicious chief, ran to hide in the forest. The people we found did not exceed 160 souls, and from this it may easily be inferred that the tribe does not include more than about a thousand members."

[103:186] The note published in 1912 about Dr. Francisco Mandacarú's journey states that the Tapirapé village visited by this explorer contained 268 inhabitants and that "almost invariably, a village merely consists of a single and numerous family." The number of villages, however, is not mentioned (cf. Kissenberth 2, 43-44).

The same applies to the account of the trip by the inspector of the Indians, mentioned earlier, which only states that "some 1,000 or 1,500" Tapirapé were found (Glass, 139).

Reverend Kegel told me that in August of 1932 he found in Tampiitáua some 14 houses with slightly more than 220 occupants. These people, as we have already mentioned, split up in September, but were together again when we visited them the following year. From 50 to 60 of them died during the 1932-1933 rainy season, and only three or four children born at that time were seen by this missionary.

poles. A large pot full of water is placed nearby to wash the mother and child. If the confinement is difficult, a woman presses the mother's belly until the child comes out. The baby is received in the arms of another woman who waits beneath the mother. The umbilical cord is severed with a cane shiver, and the afterbirth is buried. Both father and mother abstain from any food for one day. Both stay in their nets "until the loss of blood ceases, that is, often for several days." There are no food abstentions for the future parents prior to the birth. For about two years after the birth of the child, the parents give up peanuts and bananas. In addition, the father frequently abstains from those animal foods that are never eaten by the woman, especially tapir, marsh deer, rhea, and alligator, until the child is almost six years old. Only if he is a shaman may he eat of everything. The wife of a shaman, however, does not share this privilege.

The Tapirapé believe that the child will die if these abstentions are not observed. They say that in this case death would not be caused by an evil sorcerer, as they usually believe, but by the food that should not be consumed and that turns evil when it is eaten. And they add that in such cases the Whites have many medicines that might save the child, while the Tapirapé do not have any, and so among them the child would be lost. [123:54] When I offered them deer meat, which is coveted by all Tampiitaua men (perhaps because it is a type of game that, although abundant, is seldom killed without firearms), it was not accepted by the fathers of one-year-old children. Even Urukumy who, as a shaman, could have eaten the meat, was careful to pass it on to someone else after courteously accepting it from me.

The abstention from bananas and peanuts is impressive when we consider the important role played by these foods in the Tapirapé diet. It is possible that the high mortality among children during the first two years of life may have led to such onerous rules. Actually, these Indians assert that their Karajá neighbors and the Whites eat of anything when their child is ill, while Tapirapé parents, in such cases, subsist exclusively on mahioc flour and maize and manioc cauí, even when the child is older than six.

The behavior of Indian parents toward the newborn recalls to some extent a custom of the colonists of São Bonifácio, in the state of Santa Catarina, who come for the most part from Westphalia.

2: Wagley E-5 (1939-1940) 1940
SP22 Tapirapé SP22

Tapirape River. They have had only sporadic contact with Europeans. About 1909, the first Brazilians visited them in their village, and, each July or August since 1914, the Dominican priests meet them at a port on the Tapirape River and bring them presents—axes, hoes, salt, etc. Between 1930 and 1935, a Scotch Protestant missionary made three trips to the village, staying there two to three months at a stretch. During the dry season, the Tapirape regularly go down to the river for fishing and collecting turtle eggs and to wait in hope that the Dominican priests will come with a new supply of presents. There they sometimes meet trappers and hunters, and occasionally a Brazilian hunter will make the long trip to their village as an adventure, or—rarely— a Tapirape will go back with a missionary or hunter to the Araguaya—some 200 miles away—and return to the village loaded with presents and tall stories. These few contacts, the only ones which these people have had with Europeans, have nevertheless affected the Tapirape culture profoundly and in many ways. For lack of time, however, I shall describe only the effects resulting from the introduction of foreign diseases, which even antedated European contact, and the consequent wiping out of the great part of the Tapirape population.

In the memory of one Tapirape informant, there were five villages (about 1890), each of which must have contained well over two hundred people. The introduction of smallpox about 1895[1] caused one village to disband, since most of the inhabitants had died. About 1900, another European disease, probably influenza, caused a second village to break up through loss of people. Yellow fever must have taken its toll among the Tapirape at various times, as it did among the neighboring Caraja Indians, and, in 1920, the world-wide influenza epidemic came belatedly to the Araguaya and on to the Tapirape. In 1932, the survivors of a third village, depopulated by disease, joined the most southern village, Tampitawa, and, during my residence there in 1939, the survivors of a fourth village joined us. As a result of this wholesale depopulation from disease, there remained only one village

[1] Probably through the Caraja.

2: Wagley E-5 (1939-1940) 1940
SP22 Tapirapé SP22

and only 147 inhabitants. This is an extraordinary example of the ravages of European diseases among a native American people.

Tampitawa (Village of the Tapir) is composed, therefore, of a residue from all of the five original villages. All of the customs and ceremony attached to inter-village relations have of course disappeared. People remember their former village affiliation, or that of their parents. They still speak of a person as being "the son of Fish Village," but village loyalty, once strong, has disappeared. Formerly, villages were basically endogamous, but some marriage outside of the village did take place. Today, only three people can say that they are descendants of people from Tapir Village. Ancient inter-village antagonism existed, especially between Tapir and the village which joined with it in 1900. Today, this conflict is only remembered under the stress of some quarrel and is referred to only as a taunt.

Depopulation has had little effect on the economic life of the Tapirapé. They are basically a forest agricultural people with large plantations. Manioc is their staple. Plantations are large enough, and the economic organization fluid enough, to allow for the support of large numbers of refugees for a year or so until they can make gardens for themselves. Refugees have joined one of the large households, at present eight, each with some twenty-five to thirty people. Formerly these households were matrilineal groups headed by a man of high prestige. His wife's relatives formed the matrilineal group and he demanded labor from his numerous sons-in-law (husbands of daughters of wife, including extended "daughters"). The coming of refugees disrupted these matrilocal households. If a refugee woman lacked a close female kin, her husband often arranged for habitation with a friend or a relative of his. Men of high status offered the hospitality of their houses to incoming men of rank. Today, therefore, many reassortments of relatives live under one roof, and two and even three separate groups of female relatives live under as many older men, whereas formerly they would have formed one household under the leadership of one household head. In no one case, does a man control a complete household as he would have done under the old system.

4: Wagley E-5 (1939-1940) 1943
SP22 Tapirape SP22

The eight living men (*marántxunkanera* or "killers") who had killed *pančés* attest to the frequency of revenge killing of shamans because of suspected sorcery. Within the memory of one informant, Kamairá, who was approximately forty years old, ten shamans had been killed (14). During his youth he had killed a shaman, *Pančewáni*, because he believed him responsible for his younger brother's death. Going to the shaman's house the second night after his brother's death, Kamairá found the shaman asleep and killed him with several arrows through the abdomen. According to various informants, the epidemic of deaths that had been occuring then came to a halt, thus proving *Pančewáni*'s guilt. In another case the killer hid in the forest and shot the suspected shaman as he passed on his way to his garden: still another shaman was clubbed to death as he sat with his family in the village plaza. Two living "killers" had murdered women shamans by clubbing them to death. *Kučanančé* (*kučan*, woman; *pančé*, shaman) generally die by violence, according to informants; women shamans "are dangerous". They dream more than men [shamans] and they kill many Tapirapé [in dreams]", said one man. Ironically, all three of the more powerful shamans living today, at least two of whom are currently in danger because they are considered powerful enough to be suspected of "evil dreaming", murdered shamans during their youth (15).

Informants could not remember any one occasion when a shaman thus murdered was avenged by his relatives; yet informants did say that a shaman with several adult brothers — true siblings — strong enough

---

(14) The span of this man's life has seen the tremendous depopulation of the Tapirapé from imported diseases; thus it represents an abnormal period with more than the usual number of deaths and perhaps, therefore, an unusual number of revenge murders of shamans.

(15) As I write this paper, a letter comes from Valentim Gomes, my guide, and companion during both trips to the Tapirapé. I quote in part this letter translated from Portuguese: "I report that I was in the village of the Tapirapé on the twenty-sixth of July [1941]. They were all in good health and there were plenty of garden products such as manioc, yams, peanuts, etc. — There were few bananas".

"But I am sorry to say that after we left them [in May, 1940] twenty-nine adults and a few children have died. Fifteen women and fourteen men died. Among those who died was Campukwi, the best informant in the village. Also Urukumu had been killed by the young Tapirapé I called Antonio". (During my stay the Tapirapé had several times spoken of the necessity of liquidating Urukumu and several had predicted that it would occur).

What strikes us in the above table is, on the one hand, the small number of children in relation to adults (18 individuals through 15 years of age and 41 over 15 years of age), and, on the other hand, the brevity of the life span (only ten individuals were over 30). Only one man and one woman were slightly over 40.

According to the reports that I received in October, 1947, from Mr. Valentim Gomes, the man in charge of the Indian post Heloisa Alberto Torres, and from Father M. H. Lelong at Conceição do Araguaia, the numerical ratios listed above underwent modifications caused by the Kaiapó [Cayapo] attack on Tampiitáua at the end of August, in the course of which three women were killed and two women and one boy were abducted. Of the 59 individuals examined, therefore, there remained 31 males and 22 females.

Aside from illness, the custom of killing newborn children under certain circumstances contributes to the decimation of the tribe.

Of the changes in Tapirapé culture which occurred since my first visit 12 years ago, I wish to mention primarily the scarcity of vegetable foods. The literature on these peaceful and industrious Tupi Indians contains numerous references to their large plots. I may add that in the quantity and variety of their garden produce they outstripped not only the neighboring tribes but also the frontier people. In 1935, in the months of June to August, I found the village provided abundantly with the most delicious bananas, five varieties of manioc and numerous other tubers, beans, peanuts, and maize. In 1947, at the same time of year, I found almost nothing of the sort as I went through all the houses. It had become difficult to obtain a few bananas, a little cará [Tr., a variety of yam], or manioc cake. The general deficiency showed even in the size of the peanuts, for the length of their pods and seeds had decreased by nearly half, apparently owing to the quality of the soil in the new gardens. Naturally, such a change in the food situation affects the tribal behavior pattern, restraining, for example, the formerly unlimited Tapirapé hospitality.

It is true that this may also have resulted in part from contact with the neighboring Whites who have settled on the Tapirapé River over the past few years. As a rule, these frontiersmen either have nothing to offer or sell their surplus to buy salt and clothes. Their body is undernourished, but their culture compels them to clothe it. Thus, instead of satisfying the appetites of their Indian visitors, they

10: Wagley E-5 (1939-1940)1951 SP22 Tapirapé SP22
Tenetehara SO 6

"hungry for meat". Although empirical data are not available, it is my impression that meat is (and was in the past) just as scarce in Tenetehara villages, and during the rainy season fish are extremely difficult to catch. The Tenetehara, with roughly the same food supply as the Tapirapé, do not feel called upon to impose drastic limitations upon the family size. Population control among the Tapirapé seems no to result from a direct limitation imposed by food supply but from culturally derived values. In other words, although family limitation among the Tapirapé has a basis in subsistence, it does not derive from a minimum starvation situation. Family limitation seems to be related to a desire for a specific food, which the organism needs but which is also selected by Tapirapé culture as particularly desirable.

This population policy of the Tapirapé with its explicit concept of maximum family size and the use of infanticide to limit the number of children must have maintained Tapirapé population in aboriginal times on a stable level. Even then, the balance between a stable and a declining population must have been a delicate one. With an increase in the death-rate from new disease for which they did not have an acquired immunity, this delicate equilibrium was thrown off balance. After Luso-Brazilian contact, the population declined rapidly. Tapirapé concepts of population limitation remained unchanged in face of modified circumstances and families were not large enough to replace the adult population. The less rigid population policy of the Tenetehara was conducive to a large population during aboriginal times and it made the Tenetehara less vulnerable than the Tapirapé to modifications in the external environment. Without doubt numerous Tenetehara died from new diseases, from war, and from slavery after contact with Luso-Brazilians, but their desire for large families must have allowed them to replace their population in at least sufficient numbers to survive until they were able to adjust to the new circumstances.

Secondly, differences in social structure between the two tribes were also important in determining aboriginal population size as well as population trends after Luso-Brazilian contact. An extended family based upon at least temporary matrilocal residence and a widely extended bilateral kin group were basic social groupings of both the Tapirapé and the Tenetehara in aboriginal times. Tenetehara social structure was in fact limited to the extended family and the bilateral kin group. The Tapirapé, on the other hand, also had two other sets of social groups which were lacking in Tenetehara society. First, there were patrilineal ceremonial moieties limited to men. Each moiety was divided into three age-grades — boys, young men or warriors, and older men. Second, both men and women among the Tapirapé belonged to one of eight "Feast Groups" which were non-exogamous. Membership in these "Feast Groups" was patrilineal for men and matrilineal for women, although these rules were often modified by the personal desires of a parent. Both Tapirapé men's moieties and age grades and the "Feast Groups" were basic to all ceremonials and important in economic prodution and distribuition. The masked dances with impersonation of

13: Wagley E-5 (1939-1940, 1953) 1964
SP22 Tapirape SP22

Tapirapé village which he would have hesitated to relate on home grounds. He told me of adulterous affairs in process and of the growing determination among one group of kinsmen to assassinate Urukumu, the powerful medicine man, because they suspected him of performing death-dealing sorcery.

After two weeks in Furo de Pedra, I found that it would be necessary for Valentim Gomes and me to go to Rio de Janeiro. It was not possible for Champukwi to accompany us and so I arranged for two Brazilian frontiersmen to return him to a point on the Tapirapé River from which he could easily hike to his village in a day. Valentim and I then began our slow trip up the Araguaia River to the motor road and thence to Rio de Janeiro. Two months later, rid of malaria and with a new stock of supplies, we returned to spend the long rainy months from November until the end of May in the Village of the Tapirs. Champukwi was there to welcome us, and he came each day to help repair and enlarge our house. We easily fell into our former friendly relationship, now strengthened by the experience in common of the trip to Furo de Pedra and by the feeling which many anthropologists have shared with the people of their communities—that anyone who returns is an "old friend."

My return to the village that November marked, in a sense, the end of what might be called the first phase of my relationship with Champukwi as friend and as anthropological informant. During the course of at least 200 hours of conversation (many of which may be methodologically dignified as interviews), I had learned much about Champukwi as a person as well as about Tapirapé culture. I knew that as a small boy he had come from Fish Village, where his parents had died, to live in the Village of the Tapirs. He had lived with his father's younger brother, Kamaira, who was the leader of a large household. He even confided to me his boyhood name; Tapirapé change their names several times during their lifetimes and mention of a person's first childhood name, generally that of a fish, an animal, or simply descriptive of some personal characteristic, causes laughter among the audience and considerable embarrassment to the individual. I knew that Champukwi had been married before he took his current wife, and that his first wife had died in childbirth. He revealed that her kinsmen had gossiped that her death was caused by his lack of respect for the food taboos imposed

morning we embarked downriver. My last memory of Champukwi was of him standing on the bank waving in *tori* style until our boat made the curve of the river.

I did not return to visit the Tapirapé until 1953, but news of them came to me at intervals. Valentim Gomes returned to the region in 1941 as an officer of the Brazilian Indian Service, and his post was charged with the protection of the Tapirapé Indians. In his first year in this capacity, he wrote me: "I report that I was in the village of the Tapirapé on the 26th of July [1941]. They were in good health and there were plenty of garden products such as manioc, yams, peanuts, and the like. There were plenty of bananas. But I am sorry to say that after we left them, twenty-nine adults and a few children have died. Fifteen women and fourteen men died. Among those who died was Champukwi, the best informant in the village, and our best friend." Several slow exchanges of letters brought further details from Valentim. In some manner, perhaps through a visit from a Brazilian frontiersman, several Tapirapé had contracted common colds. Its fatalness to them is indicated by the name they give it—*ó-ó* (*ó* is the augmentative which might be translated as "big, big"). Since they have no knowledge of the process of contagion and have not acquired immunity to the common cold, the disease spread rapidly throughout the village. The Tapirapé realized, I knew, that colds and other diseases such as measles which they had suffered before, were derived from visitors. Yet they also believed that death resulted from evil magic or sorcery. Why do some people who are very sick from colds get well, they asked, while others who are no more ill, soon die? It is only because those who die are the victims of sorcery, they had explained to me. So, following many deaths, including that of a young man like Champukwi, who enjoyed prestige and had many kinsmen, I was not surprised to learn from Valentim Gomes that the powerful shaman, Urukumu, had been assassinated. As Champukwi had told me, suspicion of Urukumu had already been growing even during my residence in the village. After the death of Champukwi, one of his many "brothers" (actually a cousin but called by the same term as brother in Tapirapé) had entered Urukumu's house late at night and clubbed him to death. To the Tapirapé, grief and anger are closely related

To the Tapirapé, grief and anger are closely related emotions and there is one word, *iwúterahú*, that describes either or both states of mind. Thus in both word and deed grief can be quickly transformed into vengeful anger.

In 1953, when I returned to the Araguaia River, I found only fifty persons, the remnants of the Tapirapé tribe, settled under the protection of the Brazilian Indian Service in a small village near the mouth of the Tapirapé River. My old companion, Valentim Gomes, was the Indian officer in charge. The history of the intervening years had been a tragic story; the Tapirapé had suffered steady depopulation from imported diseases and they had been attacked by the warlike and hostile Kayapo tribe, who had burned their village and carried off several younger women. They had been forced to leave their own territory to seek the protection of the Indian Service, and then cattle ranchers encroached upon the Tapirapé savannas, once rich with game. Champukwi was but one of the many victims of this disintegration of Tapirapé society. Upon my arrival several of Champukwi's surviving relatives met me with the traditional "welcome of tears"; to the Tapirapé, such a return mixes emotions of joy at seeing an old friend with the sadness of the memory of those who have died during the interim. Both the sadness and the joy are expressed almost ritually by crying. People spoke sympathetically to me of the loss of my friend and they brought a young man, who had been but a small boy in 1940, but who was now known as Champukwi. This boy had visited for many months, and had even studied a little, with the Dominican missionaries on the lower Araguaia River; he therefore spoke Portuguese well. He remembered my friendship with his namesake and perhaps felt, as I did, some strange bond between us. So again for a few days the name of Champukwi was entered into my notebook as my source of information on Tapirapé culture.

In the security of our studies and in the classroom, we claim that anthropology is a social science in which regularities of human behavior and of social systems are studied. But, at its source, in the midst of the people with whom the anthropologist lives and works, field research involves the practice of an art in which emotions, subjective attitudes and reactions, and undoubtedly subconscious motivations participate. Of course, the well-trained anthropologist takes all possible precautions to be objective and to maintain a detached attitude. He gathers information from a "cross section" of